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and of *Vifill jarl* (in the *Porsteinssaga Víkingssonar*).¹⁹ We find the name already on the *Pilgårdstone* in Gothland, and in the collocation "*Vifill bauð um*."²⁰ And some noble *Vifell* occurs in the *Hestaheiti* (*Skáldskn.* ch. 58).

I cannot forbear, in conclusion, to mention *Andress'* highly interesting explanation²¹ of the hitherto obscure '*Svarðar dóttir*' as *S(ig)varðar dóttir*, which seems very plausible indeed. Together with the tentative assignation of vs. 8-10 to *Einarr Helgason skalaglam*, it is one of the best things in the book.²²

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Common Difficulties in Reading French, by CHARLES C. CLARKE, JR. New York: William R. Jenkins Co. [1910].

Professor Clarke has made a successful attempt to collect in a small volume the words and phrases which trouble students most frequently, and by omitting all but difficult questions has been able to discuss these at length. At times his discussions are even longer than is necessary. Frequently statements occur which are superfluous, if they are warnings, and unsatisfactory, if they are explanations: "Do not confuse these words"—"Note the two words"—"... is a word often misunderstood"—"... does not mean just what it seems to"—etc.

On the other hand, omissions are numerous. P. 3, in discussing the uses of *accroire*, he omits the idiom *s'en faire accroire*, 'presume too much.'—P. 13 he neglects to mention that *avoir* frequently means 'to secure.'—P. 14 he should have warned us that it is only when *avoir beau* is followed by an infinitive that it means 'to do in vain.' *Vous l'avez beau* means 'you have a fine opportunity.'—P. 27, a long list of idiomatic phrases with *coup* fails to include the very common *coup d'état*.—P. 138: "Notice that it is very common for the conclusion of a conditional sentence to appear with merely an implied condition or a complete ellipsis of it." Is it not exactly as useful to know that the conditional part may sometimes appear without the conclusion?

As to his choice of words and phrases for discussion, there is little but praise to be said. A

¹⁹ Fas. II, 384. Cf. also *Vifills borg*, *Ragnarss. L.*, Fas. I, 273.

²⁰ Trans. by Bugge, *Norges Indskrifter med de yngre Runer*, p. 18: "Dette Ombud (eller Opdrag) gav. V."

²¹ Ed., p. 15f.

²² Cf. now also Neckel, *Beiträge zur Eddaforschung*, 1908, pp. 98f., on the interpretation of v. 21.

test of the book reveals only a small number of common mistakes that are not treated. He has forgotten to distinguish *matin* from *mâtin*; *mépris* from *mêprise*; *pêcher* from *pêcher*, but even such omissions are rare.

There are a number of errors. I omit the most of those that are purely typographical: P. 5, under *Affaire*. The running of two paragraphs into one leaves the reader in confusion till he discovers the error.—P. 31. "*De* is placed, in an expletive way, before certain classes of words, where in English there is no chance to render it at all." And as one illustration of this use: "*Votre polisson de frère* (your rascal of a brother)."—P. 38. "*Durant* is often equivalent to *Pendant*, 'while' or 'during' (see *Pendant*)." But *pendant* does not appear at all.—P. 77. "After *que* and *si*, *l'* usually appears before *on* to prevent a hiatus." But if *on* followed *que* there would be no hiatus in any case.—P. 91, "*Réclamer* had better not be translated 'reclaim,' but 'to find fault,' to 'protest.'" Is it not true, rather, that *réclamer* is sometimes 'reclaim,' and at other times 'find fault' or 'protest'?—P. 95, "*Savoir* is one of four verbs that can be rendered negative by *ne* alone." There are more than four such verbs.—P. 124, "*Selon lui cortège aurait suivi*," etc., apparently for "*Selon lui le cortège*," etc.—P. 124. The paragraph marked N. B. is evidently misplaced.

The useful part of the book is the alphabetical list of words and phrases which forms Part I. Part II, "Notes on Syntax," is in no wise different from the ordinary grammar, and Part III is a succinct reference table of irregular verbs.

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Sheridan, From New and Original Material; Including a Manuscript Diary of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. By WALTER SICHEL. In two volumes. Illustrated. Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1909. 8vo., pp. xix + 631; xi + 549.

Heretofore two other men have dealt with *Sheridan's* life at first hand, Thomas Moore and Fraser Rae. Moore's *Life* has always been regarded as inadequate and unjust. Rae's *Biography*, in its statement of facts, is excellent; yet most readers, I believe, have felt repelled by the hero-worship which so highly colors its estimates of *Sheridan's* personality and achievements. Mr. Sichel justly censures Rae as follows: "Least of

all was he [Sheridan] the rose-water liberal and high-souled enthusiast of his last biographer, Mr. Rae, who has scrubbed him with Sunday soap till he shines like one of Wilkie's peasants." Certainly a juster estimate and a fuller life of Sheridan is welcome.

In his Preface Mr. Sichel states his two-fold purpose: (1) to portray Sheridan for the first time at "full-length," and (2) to present with this portrait an adequate background of the period. To accomplish these ends he has attempted to examine all the original manuscript authorities, and all books and pamphlets of any importance that bear on the subject. He has, it seems, left no stone unturned; and whatever may be the shortcomings of his book, one cannot charge him with a lack of industry. Indeed his labor, extended over years, seems to have been largely one of love. A glance at the numerous illustrations beneath which appear the significant words "in the possession of the author," shows how deeply absorbed he became in his task.

Sheridan achieved fame in two separate careers, first in literature, later in politics. Accordingly, Mr. Sichel has devoted Volume One to Sheridan's literary, and Volume Two to his political career. But before beginning the narrative he gives us what he terms an "Overture," dealing at great length (180 pages) with "The Man" and "The Moment." In this prefatory essay he attempts "to put the man and his environment into distinct categories . . . to psychologise a temperament and a time." The most interesting feature of his discussion of "The Man" is his effort to show that the secret springs of Sheridan's life were primarily sentimentalism and melancholia. "In the rough, then, Sheridan offers a study in sentiment. Round this he revolves, and it explains much in him that would otherwise remain a riddle. It is his central aspect, and all other clues to his nature radiate from it." Yet, accompanying this sentimentalism, as a kind of complement, was a strain of melancholia: "He was also what Heine has termed another, 'the knight of the laughing tear.' A constitutional melancholy neighbored his mirth, the irony of things underlay his gayest outbursts, and his mind, like that of his frolicsome forerunner, the comic Farquhar, was frequently 'dressed in black.'"

After this "Overture," given first that it may not "impede the narrative," Mr. Sichel proceeds to Sheridan's life. Working in the field almost immediately after Rae, and handling practically the same material, he has been able to check the statements of the former; hence his work has a certain authoritativeness that otherwise it would not have had. At the outset he takes issue with Rae as to the time of Sheridan's birth. This Rae had assigned, without warrant, it seems, to Octo-

ber 30; Mr. Sichel declares: "The precise day, and indeed month of Sheridan's birth is unascertained."¹ In many similar cases of detail he has been able to correct his predecessors, and frequently to settle matters hitherto in doubt. These are too numerous for mention here. Not the least interesting, however, are those in connection with Sheridan's duels. For example, it is shown that the famous letter purported to have been written by Miss Linley, and long discredited as a clumsy forgery, was in all probability a transcript from a genuine letter.

In addition to chronicling biographical facts, Mr. Sichel has quoted lavishly from Sheridan's various poems and essays, most of which he reproduces for the first time. Thus he has fulfilled his promise in the Preface "to cull a Sheridan anthology." As such his work has a unique value. Here, better than anywhere else, one may form an idea of Sheridan's ability as a lyric poet.

In Volume One, also, Mr. Sichel discusses at great length each of Sheridan's plays. The chapter on *The School for Scandal* is especially full, and valuable for its handling of the successive stages through which that comedy passed. For the purposes of this review, however, I shall confine myself to the discussion of *The Rivals*. This, I find, is not without errors. The third sentence contains the statement: "After two performances it was withdrawn"—a venerable mistake, for which no excuse can be given. The play was withdrawn after one performance. On page 500 the same error is made with further complications: "On the second night, however, the part [of Sir Lucius] was transferred with less odium [from Lee] to Clinch, and Sheridan, who in despair had thought of throwing the piece overboard, was induced by Harris, the manager, to withdraw it for revision." Clinch did not assume the rôle of Sir Lucius until the revised play was put on the boards ten nights after the first performance. On page 486 Mr. Sichel represents the Prologue as "pointing to the mask of Thalia on the proscenium." Yet Sheridan clearly says: "Pointing to the figure of Comedy"; and there was on either side of the stage, near the proscenium, a statue, one of Comedy, the other of Tragedy. These statues are shown quite clearly in a picture of the stage of the Covent Garden Theatre, reproduced in George Paston's *Social Caricatures in the Eighteenth Century*. On page 489 Mr. Sichel quotes a passage from Congreve as having suggested Bob Acres's oaths, with the remark: "A rather suspicious coincidence which the plagiarism-hunters have missed." Professor Nettleton in his edition of *The Rivals* (*The Major Dramas of*

¹ Nevertheless, Mr. Sichel begins his chapter (p. 235) dogmatically: "Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridan was born . . . towards the close of September, 1751."

Sheridan), pointed out this fact in 1906. Finally, Mr. Sichel underestimates Mrs. Malaprop's indebtedness to Mrs. Tryfort in *A Journey to Bath*.² He admits only three verbal borrowings ("Thirdly and this exhausts the list"). The present writer has counted no less than nine such borrowings. On page 299 is revealed, in a speech of Sir Anthony, an interesting reminiscence from *Sheridan* and Halhed's unpublished comedy *Ixion*. Even more interesting, however, is the identification of autobiographical influences in the play. From the day *The Rivals* was first presented writers have suggested that Lydia Languish and Captain Absolute represented in some measure Miss Linley and *Sheridan*. Mr. Sichel, however, thinks otherwise: "Faulkland and Julia . . . are true transcripts from himself and Miss Linley. Nothing can be more certain." This is ingenious, yet critics of the play will not accept so bold a statement without hesitation.

Volume Two deals entirely with *Sheridan's* political life, with which, of course, the student of literature is less concerned. It is conspicuous for three things: the interesting and valuable *Diary of the Duchess of Devonshire*, printed for the first time; generous excerpts from *Sheridan's* famous Begum speech, hitherto regarded as lost; and conclusive evidence that the remarkable state document, the Prince of Wales's *Letter to Mr. Pitt*, was written, not by Burke, as commonly believed, but by *Sheridan*.

In an Appendix is given a "Bibliography of *Sheridan's* Works, Published and Unpublished." This is far more exhaustive than any previous bibliography, yet is by no means complete. It even fails to record the most scholarly edition, Professor Nettleton's *The Major Dramas of Sheridan*, 1906. The *Index* is hard to use, and is full of errors, both of omission and commission.

Of the press-work too much can hardly be said in praise. The paper is of superior quality, the type is large and clear, and the binding, in red cloth with the arms of the *Sheridan* family on the sides, is tasteful and pleasing. Most noteworthy, however, is the richness of illustration. There are forty-seven full-page prints in brown, many of them now published for the first time, and together forming an invaluable collection of pictorial matter. In addition, there are three folding sheets of pedigrees. The publishers, in short, have done for the book all that could be desired.

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WILLIAM LILLY and *The Alchemist*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—The two following passages from *William Lilly's History of his Life and Times* are of interest as illustrating first, the general situation of Jonson's *Alchemist*, a house left in charge of a servant during the prevalence of the plague, and secondly, the ridiculous scene (Act III, Scene 5) in which poor Dapper is introduced to the Queen of Faery. Lilly, it will be remembered, was a notable astrologer of his day, half charlatan and half the dupe of his own occult learning. His *Life* in its mixture of candor and craft, its realistic anecdote and credulous half belief, is one of the most entertaining relics of its time. The narrative, which is of course desultory in the extreme, extends from the year 1602 to 1681, having been written by Lilly in the sixty-sixth year of his age and addressed "to his worthy friend Elias Ashmole, Esq.," to whom we owe so much in the way of the preservation of manuscripts dealing with the occult. Lilly's manuscript was first published in the year 1715 by Charles Burman. It was reprinted in 1774 with the life of Ashmole, and again in 1822.

The situation in this first passage, it will be noticed, is precisely that of Lovewit and his servant Face, left in charge, even to the Master's marriage soon after. It is not even impossible to imagine Lovewit as dying, and Dame Pliant taking the clever servant for a third husband as here. But this is romancing, and in point of time the fiction preceded the fact.

"In 1625, the visitation increasing, and my master having a great charge of money and plate, some of his own, some other men's, left me and a fellow-servant to keep the house, and himself in June went into Leicestershire. He was in that year of fee collector for twelve poor alms people living in Clement Dane's churchyard; whose pensions I in his absence paid weekly, to his and the parish's great satisfaction. My master was no sooner gone down, but I bought a bas-viol, and got a master to instruct me; the intervals of time I spent in bowling in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, with Wat the cobbler, Dick the blacksmith, and such like companions. We have sometimes been at our work at six in the morning, and so continued till three or four in the afternoon, many times without bread or drink all that while. . . . In November my master came home. My fellow-servant's and my diet came weekly to six shillings and sixpence, sometimes to seven shillings, so cheap was diet at that time.

²On page 251 Sichel observes: "She [Mrs. Thomas Sheridan] left two acts of an unfinished comedy, '*A Journey to Bath*.'" This should read "three acts." The reference is omitted from the *Index*.